

Great Falls Youth Transition Centers - Information 1-10-09

History:

The Youth Transition Centers (YTC) began as the Youth Evaluation Program in the 1970s. Through department organizational changes it has operated for 16 years as YTC, licensed as a group home by the Department of Public Health and Human Services. In 1998 the department opened a residence for girls in a converted garage. Youth typically stay 4-6 months but may stay longer. The program allows a graduated sanction option rather than sending a youth back to a correctional facility for lesser parole violations. It is also used for youth who are leaving a secure facility when another appropriate placement is not available, or when the youth needs a short-term placement while awaiting another community placement. **(Daily cost is less at YTC than at Secure Youth Correctional Facilities.)**

Current:

Youth placed at YTC are eligible for Medicaid, saving on medical and mental health treatment. Capacity now allows placement of 12 males and 5 females. **(Medicaid payment for medical and mental health reduces state general fund payments for these.)**

Youth Sex Offenders having finished the Youth Correctional Facility treatment program may be placed at YTC and access continuing outpatient sex offender treatment in addition to other programming. The general program for all youth focuses on education, treatment, employment, community service and restitution, life skills, and appropriate recreation.

Mentors and tutors enhance the program by improving youths' school performance and offering a positive adult influence additional to Department of Corrections' staff members. They also offer group sessions using the cognitive approach. A parish nurse visits routinely to offer health expertise and advice to the youth and community support team members and faith connections for youth so desiring.

Reasoning for new construction:

Moving to another leased facility would require an extensive process to site a facility. We would anticipate much community resistance.

Current lease cost:

Beginning date	Oct. 2006	Sept. 2007	Oct. 2008	Oct. 2009
Annual cost	\$30,300	\$34,992	\$34,992	\$32,400
		Includes reimbursing owner for installation of air conditioning	Includes reimbursing owner for installation of air conditioning	6.9% increase over \$30,300 in 2006

The savings in lease cost will, over time, pay for the new construction.

Current lease requirements:

Department is responsible for insect control, lawn maintenance and weed removal; provides and maintains smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detection alarms, fire extinguishers, carpet, linoleum, drapes and blinds, paint, varnish stains and repairs any damage done by employees/agents or residents. Hot water tanks are owned and maintained by the department. Department maintains and repairs 2 ranges up to \$250.00, 2 ovens up to \$500.00, and microwave up to \$350.00.

Group Home licensing requirements:

Group Home licensing will require minimum capacity of 7; the girls' house current capacity is 5 and in the converted garage is a considerably less than desirable space for storage and privacy. ADA accessibility is not possible in either building without major reconstruction, presenting difficulties with federal requirements. Lack of basement egress windows impedes exit in case of fire or other emergency.